IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraphs of the specification as follows:

Please replace paragraph [1044] with the following amended paragraph:

[1044] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, as illustrated in **FIG. 4**, the bit stream of information to be transmitted **402** is first encoded by an outer encoder ~~decoder~~ **406** and the encoded stream is then provided into the inner encoder (not shown), residing on the physical layer **408**. The bit stream of information to be transmitted **402**, originating at higher layers, is provided to a transmit buffer **404**. The transmit buffer is illustrated in more detail in **FIG. 5**. Referring to **FIG. 5**, the bits fill the systematic portion **504[[(1)]]** of the transmit buffer **404** (of **FIG. 4**) row by row from left to right. The systematic portion **504[[(1)]]** comprises k rows **508** of length L. In one embodiment, as shown in **FIG. 5**, the length L of the buffer coincides with the length of a radio frame without the overhead (e.g., CRC to help the inner decoder and the tail bits for the inner encoder). Referring back to **FIG. 4**, once the systematic portion **504[[(4)]]** (of **FIG. 5**) is full, the outer block encoder **406** is activated to perform column-wise encoding of the bits in the systematic portion **504(1)** (of **FIG. 5**) to generate (n-k) additional rows **510** (of **FIG. 5**) of parity bits. This column-wise operation is performed column by column for binary outer code, i.e., $m = 1$. For non-binary code, i.e., $m > 1$, every m adjacent columns in a row are treated as a m-bit symbol. The m-bit symbols along the top k rows are read by the outer encoder to produce n-k m-bit symbols that fill the corresponding lower n-k rows of these columns.

Please replace paragraph [1045] with the following amended paragraph:

[1045] In another embodiment, the length L of the buffer is equal to the number of bits the inner coded frames carries divided by m, the dimension of the outer encoder code. In this embodiment, the first m rows from the TX buffer are sent in the first inner coded frame, the second m rows of bits are sent in the second inner-coded frame, until the entire buffer is

transmitted. Referring back to **FIG. 4**, once the systematic portion **504[[(4)]]** (of **FIG. 5**) is full, the outer block encoder **406** is activated to perform column-wise encoding of the bits in the systematic portion **504(1)** (of **FIG. 5**) to generate m(n-k) additional rows **510** (of **FIG. 5**) of parity bits. This column-wise operation is performed column by column for binary outer code, i.e., $m = 1$. For non-binary code, i.e., $m > 1$, every m-rows of a column form a m-bit symbol. The k symbols from the top $k\,m$ rows in the column are read by the outer encoder to produce (n - k) m-bit symbols that fill the corresponding lower m(n-k) rows of this column.

Please replace paragraph [1046] with the following amended paragraph:

[1046] In one embodiment the outer encoder comprises a systematic Reed-Solomon (R-S). The content of the transmit buffer **404** is then provided to a physical layer **408**. On the physical layer **408**, the individual frames are encoded by an inner encoder (not shown), which results in encoded frames. The structure of the inner encoder ~~decoder~~ may be, e.g., the structure of **FIG. 3**. The systematic rows and the parity rows of the buffer may be interlaced during transmission to reduce the chance of large number of systematic rows erased when the total number of inner code erasure exceeds the outer code's correcting capability. The frames are further processed in accordance with a selected modulation scheme. In one embodiment, the processing is performed in accordance with the IS-2000 standard. The processed frames are then transmitted over a communication channel **410**.

Please replace paragraph [1049] with the following amended paragraph:

[1049] If the inner decoder cannot decode the frame, the decoder declares an erasure, and provides an outer block decoder **416** with an indication that the frame is missing. The process continues until there are as many parity frames received correctly and passed to a parity portion **414(2)** of a receive buffer **414**, as there are erased systematic frames. The receiver stops the reception of any remaining frames and the outer decoder **416** ~~(not shown)~~ is activated to recover the erased systematic frames. The recovered systematic frames are passed to the upper layer.

Please replace paragraph [1056] with the following amended paragraph:

[1056] To enhance the Common Broadcast Forward Link performance, soft and softer handoffs are desirable in overlapped coverage areas of different sectors. The method and system for providing a communication with a subscriber station through more than one base station during the soft hand-off process are disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,731,936 ~~a co-pending application serial number XX/XXX,XXX,~~ entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HANDOFF IN A BROADCAST COMMUNICATION SYSTEM," issued May 4, 2004 ~~filed on August 20, 2001~~, and assigned to the assignee of the present invention.

Please replace paragraph [1059] with the following amended paragraph:

[1059] **FIG. 7** illustrates unsynchronized transmission between SHO Group 1 **602** and SHO Group 2 **604** (from **FIG. 6**), where the transmission from the Base Stations of SHO Group 1 **602** is delayed relative to the transmission from the Base Stations of SHO Group 2 **604**. The subscriber station (not shown) is monitoring transmission from a base station of SHO Group 1 **602**. At time t_0 the subscriber station determines that a hard handoff to a different SHO Group is indicated. The handoff is indicated, e.g., when a quality metric of received transmission falls below a threshold. The subscriber station then determines whether a soft handoff is possible. In accordance with one embodiment, the subscriber station determines a configuration of neighbor sectors in accordance with a value of an HSBS neighbor configuration indicator (NGHBR_CONFIG_HSBS) transmitted by the current base station. Such a method is described in detail in the above-cited U.S. Patent No. 6,731,936 ~~a co-pending application serial number XX/XXX,XXX,~~ entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HANDOFF IN A BROADCAST COMMUNICATION SYSTEM," issued May 4, 2004 ~~filed on August 20, 2001~~, and assigned to the assignee of the present invention. The subscriber station continues to accumulate frames of Buffer 1 **702(1)** until time t_1, when the subscriber station has accumulated enough good frames in Buffer 1 **702(1)** for decoding. This includes packets P_0 **704(2)**, P_1 (which was transmitted in part $P_{1,1}$ **704(4)** in Buffer 0 **702(0)** and part $P_{1,2}$ **706(2)** in Buffer 1 **702(1)**), and P_2 [[P_3]] **706(4)**. The symbol P denotes a systematic part of a buffer; the symbol R denotes the redundant part. The

subscriber station initiates hard handoff and acquires transmission a base station of SHO Group 2 **604** in time t_2. The interval $\Delta t = t_2 - t_1$ depends on the type of handoff the subscriber station performs, e.g., inter-frequency hard handoff, same frequency handoff, design of the subscriber station and base station, and other criteria known to one of ordinary skills in the art. Different methods of performing handoff are discussed in the above-cited U.S. Patent No. 6,731,936 ~~a co-pending application serial number XX/XXX,XXX,~~ entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HANDOFF IN A BROADCAST COMMUNICATION SYSTEM," issued May 4, 2004 ~~filed on August 20, 2001~~, and assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Thus at time t_2 the subscriber station begins receiving frames **712** transmitted by a base station of SHO Group 2 **604**. Because of the correcting capability of the encoding in accordance with an embodiment of this invention, the received frames may be enough to correctly decode packets P_2 **716(2)**, P_3 **716(4)** of Buffer 1 **716(4)**. The subscriber station discards any duplicate packets. One of ordinary skills in the art recognizes that the above-disclosed principles apply in the scenario, in which the transmission from the base stations of SHO Group 1 **602** is advanced relative to the transmission from the base stations of SHO Group 2 **604**.

Please replace paragraph [1067] with the following amended paragraph:

[1067] As illustrated in **FIG. 6**, all subscriber stations in an SHO Group are either monitoring the common broadcast forward link, engaged in a communication with other subscriber stations, or monitoring a paging channel. The paging channel, which the subscriber station are monitoring, is known to the communication system. The paging channel is assigned to the subscribers monitoring the paging channel and engaged in a communication with other subscriber stations in accordance with methods utilized by current communications systems, e.g., IS-2000, WCDMA, UMTS. Additionally/alternatively, the paging channel to the subscribers is assigned in accordance with methods disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,731,936 ~~a co-pending application serial number XX/XXX,XXX,~~ entitled "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HANDOFF IN A BROADCAST COMMUNICATION SYSTEM," issued May 4, 2004 ~~filed on~~

~~August 20, 2001~~, and assigned to the assignee of the present invention. Consequently, it is possible to page any subscriber.